Pocahontas West Virginia Writers' Project

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Chapter 6 - Section 1

It cannot be known who preached the first sermon in this county, but the names of many pioneer ministers are remembered. Everywhere in the settlement of the west the frontier preacher was an important factor, and scarcely was the roof of the cabin made before the Methodist circuit rider or Baptist missionary made his appearance, collected the neighbors, preached a sermon, left an appointment for sometime, perhaps a year in the future, and after a friendly farewell, he continued his journey to another settlement.

Among those who visited first what is now Pocahontas County were: Revs. James Avis, John Miller, Amos Smith, J. W. Kenney, James Watts, Samuel Ellis, Wm. P. McDowell, Elisha Knox, James Kerr, William Houston, Harvey Sawyers, N. Pendleton, and John Howe.

In extracts from the journal of Rev. Francis Asbury, we find that in the years of 1788, 1790 and 1796, he made evangelistic tours through this section of the county coming up through Greenbrier County each time and being entertained and preaching at the home of the McNeels in the Little Levels, going from there to the Drinnons home , where he was received so "gladly" and entertained so "kindly" in the Edray neighborhood. His course led from there to Clover Lick, down through Tygarts Valley in Randolph County enroute to Morgantown. At the McNeel home lively religious discussions were indulged in by the whole community.

Information: Hardesty's Encyclopedia
Miss Bell Poage.